

Until recently the traffic control staff of the Department was employed on rural roads only. During the year arrangements were made with thirty-one boroughs whereby the Department took over the control of traffic within their boundaries, each Council paying an agreed-upon sum in respect of the services rendered.

Seven additional Inspectors were appointed during the year, bringing the total number as at 31st March, 1939, to 60.

(2) CONVICTIONS FOR TRAFFIC OFFENCES.

Table No. 9 in the Appendix sets forth a classification of the convictions for the principal traffic offences recorded in the Magistrates' and Supreme Courts during the last ten years. These figures cover the prosecutions taken by the Police Force, local-body Traffic Inspectors, and the Traffic Force of this Department. The figures for 1938 exclude Children's Court cases, which are included in the figures for previous years.

The number of convictions per 1,000 motor-vehicles rose from 68 in 1937 to 83 in 1938, and is now higher than at any other period during the last eight years.

In the detailed analysis of the offences it is interesting to note that

- (a) In 1938 685 drivers were convicted of being drunk in charge of a motor-car, against 573 in the previous year.
- (b) Convictions for negligent driving rose from 3,744 in 1937 to 4,523 in 1938.
- (c) Excessive speed in motor-vehicles accounted for 2,855 convictions, in comparison with 1,587 in 1937.
- (d) Breaches of the parking regulations caused 3,547 convictions, in contrast with 2,161 in the previous year.
- (e) A heavy increase occurred in convictions for minor traffic offences, which increased from 1,587 to 5,237.

(3) ENFORCEMENT OF TRAFFIC LAWS BY THE TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT.

(a) *General Enforcement Work.*

The staff has been located at suitable headquarters throughout the country, and each man has a definite area to patrol. This permits each officer to become fully acquainted with the area he is covering, and enables his patrols to be regulated according to the traffic flow.

On special occasions, such as race meetings, shows, and other important events, where there is a heavy volume of traffic, special patrol duties are performed and the traffic flow regulated to the best advantage.

On the road-safety side, several of the officers spent a considerable amount of time in giving lectures and instruction in safe driving and in the distribution of safety posters in suitable localities.

During the ten-monthly period, June, 1938, to March, 1939 (no record was kept for April and May) the patrols covered over 1,168,000 miles, issued verbal or written warnings for 33,000 offences, weighed 5,370 vehicles for suspected overloading, and tested nearly 3,800 people for drivers' licenses. In addition, during the full year 10,435 of the more serious offences were reported.

(b) *Traffic Offence Bureau.*

Full details of the results of the year's operations under the scheme of traffic-offence notices and a central bureau are set out in Table No. 11.

It has been found that the system has been working very satisfactorily, and as from the 1st January, 1939, arrangements were made to obtain full details of traffic-offence notices issued by all local-body Traffic Inspectors and by the Police Department. Thus the bureau will now have complete records of all the traffic-offence notices issued in the Dominion.

(c) *Prosecutions.*

During the year ending 31st March, 1939, some 7,582 informations were laid by the Department in respect of breaches of the laws relating to motor traffic. Convictions were obtained in 7,298 cases and the Courts imposed fines (exclusive of costs) totalling £10,748. In 112 instances the cases were dismissed by the Court, and in 172 cases the informations were withdrawn. Full details of these cases are included in Table No. 10.

(d) *Late Inspector Allcock.*

It is with deep regret that record is made of the death of the late Traffic Inspector T. H. Allcock, who was accidentally killed while on duty in the Rotorua district on Christmas Eve. Inspector Allcock was a very promising officer.

E. INSPECTION OF MOTOR VEHICLES.

All motor-vehicles operated in the Dominion are required to undergo periodical mechanical inspection, the work being classified into three main divisions:—

Inspection of—

- (1) Passenger-vehicles under Transport Licensing Act.
- (2) Goods-vehicles under Transport Licensing Act.
- (3) Other vehicles.